



NORTHWEST COLORADO FIRE MANAGEMENT UNIT

FINAL News Release

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Blair Fire doesn't grow for second day *Firefighters spot unmanned aircraft incursion*

MEEKER, Colo. – The firefighting effort for the 1,140-acre Blair Fire 20 miles west of Meeker is scaling down as fire activity wanes. However, a small unmanned aircraft (or drone) being flown by private individuals was spotted near the incident command post.

“If we see an unmanned aircraft near a fire, all firefighting aircraft leave the area,” said James Michels, Assistant Fire Management Officer for the Northwest Colorado Interagency Fire Management Unit. “This increases risks to our firefighters and the public, and it can significantly hamper our operations. Unauthorized incursions by unmanned aircraft are becoming an increasing problem on wildfires throughout the West. Remember – if you fly, we can’t.”

Firefighters made contact with the people operating the small quadcopter, who said they were unaware of the danger and readily left the area.

About 30 firefighters worked the fire today, strengthening fire lines and maintaining containment at 70 percent. Firefighters will continue to strengthen lines and patrol the perimeter. Although firefighters do not expect the fire to grow further, they will monitor any growth to the south, where the fire would continue to improve wildlife habitat. This will be the last fire update unless the situation changes.

Since the fire was first reported June 29, firefighters have been managing it to keep firefighter and public safety the top priority, protect infrastructure, and improve wildlife habitat.

Updates will be posted at www.inciweb.nwcg.gov and on the BLM Colorado Fire Facebook page, www.facebook.com/BLMColoradoFire.

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